

Message Text

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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9839
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO RIYADH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 00751

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, CU
SUBJECT: CUBAN DIPLOMAT'S VIEWS ON NON-ALIGNED ISSUES

SUMMARY. MISOFF HAD LONG DISCUSSION MARCH 1 WITH JUAN BLANCO, CHIEF OF NON-ALIGNED AFFAIRS UNIT IN CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTRY. SUBJECTS COVERED INCLUDED DEFINITION OF NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM); LEFTWARD DRIFT IN NAM; FUTURE OF NAM; PUERTO RICO; NAM IMPACT AT UN; NAM AND THE G-77; US TDY OFFICER AT NAM KABUL CONFERENCE; AND HORN OF AFRICA (SEPTTEL). END SUMMARY.

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1. MISOFF (GRAHAM) DISCUSSED NON-ALIGNED SUBJECTS AT LENGTH MARCH 1 WITH JUAN BLANCO, A MEMBER OF THE CUBAN DELEGATION TO THE UN. BLANCO ALSO REPORTEDLY HEADS THE NON-ALIGNED AFFAIRS UNIT IN THE CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTRY. DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON TOPICS WHICH FOLLOW.

2. WHAT IS THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)? BLANCO

CAUTIONED THAT IT WAS A MISTAKE TO VIEW THE NAM AS AN IDEOLOGICAL BLOC. RATHER IT WAS A SHIFTING COALITION OF INTERESTS WHICH WAS ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE VIEWS OF COUNTRIES AS IDEOLOGICALLY DISPARATE AS SAUDI ARABIA AND CUBA. THE GLUE FOR THE NAM WAS, FIRST, THE STRONG DRIVE FOR NATIONAL FREEDOM AND IDENTITY IN NATIONS EMERGING AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND, SECOND, A COMMITMENT TO MODERATE THE FORCES WHICH, IF LEFT UNCHECKED, COULD LEAD TO NUCLEAR WAR. BLANCO SAID THAT THE NAM SAW THE US AS THE CHIEF OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS TOWARD THE TWO GENERAL OBJECTIVES DESCRIBED ABOVE AND THEREFORE ITS ENERGIES INESCAPABLY WERE IN LARGE PART DIRECTED AGAINST THE POLICIES OF UNITED STATES. THE US GAVE NOTHING TO THE NEW ECONOMIC ORDER. IT REFUSED TO SEVER ITS LINKS WITH WHITE RACIST REGIMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA OR WITH ISRAEL. IT FUELED THE ARMS RACE. ALL THE NON-ALIGNED STATES - FROM CUBA TO SAUDI ARABIA - COULD THUS UNITE IN OPPOSITION TO THESE US-IMPOSED OBSTACLES TO NATIONAL FREEDOM AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

3. LEFTWARD DRIFT IN THE NAM? BLANCO AGREED THAT, "USING THE US VOCABULARY", ONE HAD TO SAY THAT THE NAM WAS MOVING TO THE LEFT. HE AGAIN CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, AGAINST USING IDEOLOGICAL TERMS LIKE "LEFT". IF THE NAM WAS MOVING TO THE "LEFT", IT WAS NOT BECAUSE IT SOUGHT TO ALIGN ITSELF WITH COMMUNISM OR WITH THE EAST, BUT

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BECAUSE THE US REMAINED OPPOSED TO THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF THE MOVEMENT. BLANCO DISMISSED THE CHARGE THAT THE NAM WAS NOT REALLY "NON-ALIGNED" JUST BECAUSE IT HAD MEMBERS IN IT LIKE CUBA AND VIETNAM. "CAPITALIST" STATES LIKE SAUDI ARABIA AND ZAIRE WERE ALSO MEMBERS, HE POINTED OUT. AND IF SOME MEMBERS AGREED WITH THE POSITIONS OF THE SOVIET BLOC REGARDING CERTAIN ISSUES, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THOSE POSITIONS WERE "RIGHT". BLANCO SAID THAT THE US SHOULD NOT FEAR THE UPCOMING CUBAN PRESIDENCY OF THE NAM. CUBA, HE SAID, IS TRADITIONALLY A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL CHAIRMAN OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. CUBAN VIEWS WILL STILL BE HEARD, HOWEVER, (AT THE HAVANA NAM SUMMIT, FOR EXAMPLE) BECAUSE CUBA PLANNED TO HAVE ITS OWN DELEGATE SPEAK THE UNMITIGATED CUBAN POSITION FROM THE FLOOR WHILE THE PRESIDING CUBAN CHAIRMAN RETAINED A MORE IMPARTIAL STANCE.

4. THE FUTURE OF THE NAM. BLANCO DID NOT THINK THAT THE NAM WAS LOSING ITS REASON FOR EXISTENCE JUST BECAUSE SOME OF THE EDGES HAD BEEN SMOOTHED OFF THE COLD WAR AND BECAUSE SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN DECOLONIZATION. THE COLD WAR WAS FAR FROM OVER. IT LINGERED ON

IN THE US MENTALITY AND IN THE US MILITARY BUDGET. THE ARMS RACE SHOWED NO SIGNS OF DIMINISHING. AS FOR DECOLONIZATION, THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND PUERTO RICO WERE CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE PROCESS WAS FAR FROM COMPLETE. THE NAM'S CHIEF CONCERNS NOW, AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, WERE (1) THE MIDDLE EAST; (2) SOUTHERN AFRICA; AND (3) NORTH/SOUTH ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

5. PUERTO RICO. BLANCO SAID HIS COUNTRY'S POSITION ON PUERTO RICO WAS FRANKLY IDEOLOGICAL. CUBA DID NOT BELIEVE THERE COULD BE A FREE ELECTION IN PUERTO RICO WITHOUT INDEPENDENCE. EVEN IF A FREE ELECTION SHOULD SHOW THAT PUERTO RICO DID NOT PREFER INDEPENDENCE, CUBA WOULD
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NOT DESIST. AS CASTRO HAD SAID, CUBA WOULD SUPPORT EVEN ONE PUERTO RICAN WHO WISHED INDEPENDENCE. CUBA WOULD CONTINUE WORKING TO RAISE THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ALL PUERTO RICANS THAT INDEPENDENCE WAS IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS. AS WAS THE CASE WITH THE KOREAN ISSUE, FORMER OPPOSITION WITHIN THE NAM TO THE CUBAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO HAD DIED AWAY. THE RESULTS OF THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE ILLUSTRATED THE COMMITMENT OF THE NAM TO AN INDEPENDENT PUERTO RICO. MISOFF INTERJECTED THAT AT COLOMBO, SRI LANKA AND OTHER SO-CALLED MODERATES HAD

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PERHAPS JUST BOWED TO INTENSE CUBAN PRESSURE AS THE EASIEST WAY OUT ON THE ISSUE, AND THAT THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF LANGUAGE ON PUERTO RICO DID NOT REPRESENT A COMMITMENT TO THE CUBAN POSITION. BLANCO DISAGREED AND INSISTED THAT CUBA HAD NOW SUCCEEDED IN RAISING THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE NAM REGARDING PUERTO RICO AND KOREA. HE CAUTIONED THE US NOT TO INTERPRET THE RELATIVE SILENCE OF THE MODERATES IN THE NAM ON PUERTO RICO, KOREA AND OTHER ISSUES AS LACK OF BACKBONE IN THE FACE OF CUBAN ACTIVISM -- IT WAS IN FACT GENUINE CONVICTION THAT THE CUBANS WERE RIGHT.

6. NAM IMPACT AT THE UNITED NATIONS. BLANCO SAID THAT THE NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE (NACC) AND ITS VARIOUS WORKING GROUPS IN NEW YORK OPERATED PRINCIPALLY AS A FILTER BETWEEN THE VARIOUS REGIONAL GROUPS AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE NACC OFTEN "UPGRADED" LANGUAGE WHICH HAD BEEN "WATERED DOWN" BY MODERATES (E.G., ZAIRE) IN THE VARIOUS REGIONAL GROUPS BUT IT ALSO OCCASIONALLY ACTED TO TEMPER EXTREME LANGUAGE. THE IMPACT OF THE NACC VARIED ACCORDING TO THE ISSUE. REGARDING AFRICAN ISSUES, THE AFRICAN GROUP WAS RELATIVELY STRONG AND ACTIVE AND SO THE NACC HAD RELATIVELY LITTLE IMPACT ON AFRICAN ISSUES. EXACTLY THE REVERSE WAS TRUE FOR LATIN AMERICA ISSUES. REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONS, THE NACC WAS ACTIVE LAST FALL BECAUSE THE ARAB GROUP WAS SO BADLY SPLIT OVER THE SADAT INITIATIVE AND THE NACC HAD ACTED TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY COMPROMISES. REGARDING DISARMAMENT, THE NACC HAD TAKEN A STRONG INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE UPCOMING SPECIAL SESSION. REGARDING ECONOMIC ISSUES, IT WAS IN FACT THE GROUP OF 77 THAT TOOK THE LEAD IN NEW YORK.

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7. THE NAM AND THE G-77. BLANCO SAID THAT IT WAS THE NAM WHICH SET ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR THE THIRD WORLD AND WHICH GAVE POLITICAL IMPETUS TO ITS ECONOMIC INITIATIVES. THE NAM, HOWEVER, LEFT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE INITIATIVES AND THEIR TECHNICAL TREATMENT LARGELY TO THE G-77. THIS WAS NOT DUE TO A LACK OF EXPERTISE WITHIN THE NAM BUT BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO INSULATE THIRD WORLD DELIBERATIONS ON ECONOMIC ISSUES FROM THIRD WORLD INTERNAL POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL RIVALRIES. THE NAM WAS A POLITICAL BODY. IF IT TRIED TO DEAL IN DETAIL WITH THE WHOLE RANGE OF NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES, ITS DEBATES WOULD INESCAPABLY FOUNDER ON THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS CONTAINED IN ALL ECONOMIC ISSUES AND THE VITALLY NECESSARY SOLIDARITY OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD ON ECONOMIC ISSUES WOULD BE SHATTERED. UNLIKE, SAY, THE ISSUES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, THERE WERE "INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS" WITHIN THE NAM ON ECONOMIC ISSUES - CONTRADICTIONS WHICH HAD TO BE SUPPRESSED IN THE INTERESTS OF UNITY. THUS THE G-77 HAD BEEN CREATED TO DEFINE AND PROMOTE A THIRD WORLD COMMON DENOMINATOR ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, ABOVE THE "INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS" AMONG THE DEVELOPING STATES THEMSELVES. ONLY IN THIS WAY COULD STATES LIKE CUBA AND SAUDI ARABIA AGREE ON COMMON POSITIONS WITH WHICH TO FACE THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.

8. US TDY OFFICER IN KABUL. MISOFF TOLD BLANCO THAT THE USG PLANNED TO SEND HIM TO KABUL DURING THE MEETING OF THE NAC BUREAU IN MAY. BLANCO SAID THAT, WHILE HE PERSONALLY WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE A DRINK WITH MISOFF IN KABUL, MISOFF SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT, OFFICIALLY, CUBA WOULD OPPOSE HIS PRESENCE AND THAT MISOFF SHOULD EXPECT SOME "CUBAN FROWNS". CUBA AND OTHER DELEGATIONS WOULD HAVE TO ASSUME THAT MISOFF WOULD BE THERE ONLY TO LOBBY THE MODERATES TOWARD A PRO-US POSITION. MISOFF CAREFULLY EXPLAINED THAT LOBBYING WOULD NOT BE THE REASON FOR HIS PRESENCE. HIS INSTRUCTIONS VERY CAREFULLY SPELLED OUT

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THAT HE WAS TO MAINTAIN A VERY LOW PROFILE IN KABUL AND TO APPROACH THE CONFERENCE IN A VERY LOW-KEY WAY. MISOFF THEN EXPLAINED TO BLANCO THE REASONS FOR THE USG DECISION TO SEND AN OFFICER TO KABUL (INCREASED US

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INTEREST IN THE NAM, A SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND BETWEEN
THE NAM AND THE US, A CLARIFICATION OF POSITIONS ON WHICH
WE DIFFERED). BLANCO LISTENED BUT SAID HE STILL MUST
APOLOGIZE IN ADVANCE IF HE SHOULD, IN KABUL, OFFICIALLY
HAVE TO OBJECT TO MISOFF'S PRESENCE. MISOFF SAID HE
HOPED THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY AND THAT THE
NAM IN TIME MIGHT UNDERSTAND THAT INCREASED US INTEREST
IN THE NAM AND KNOWLEDGE OF ITS CONCERNS COULD BE A
POSITIVE THING FOR ALL CONCERNED.

9. HORN OF AFRICA. (SEPTTEL).

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10. ATMOSPHERICS. LONG CONVERSATION WAS FRIENDLY AND

CANDID THROUGHOUT. BLANCO IS AN IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED
COMMUNIST. WHILE HE TENDS TO SEE A CIA AGENT BEHIND
EVERY POTTED PALM AND BELIEVES THE US PRESS TO BE A
CREATURE OF THE GOVERNMENT, HE IS BASICALLY AN OPEN,
INTELLIGENT AND SENSITIVE OFFICER OF HIS COUNTRY'S
DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. YOUNG

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